

CLAIMS

1. In a protective helmet having a shell for receiving a head of a wearer, the head including a face having a frontal area and a mandibular area, improvements therein comprising:

a ballistic shield carried by the shell and movable between a raised position in which the shield spans the frontal area of the face and a lowered position in which the shield spans the mandibular area of the face.

2. The improvements of Claim 1, wherein the shell includes an outer surface and wherein the ballistic shield includes an outer surface, the outer surface of the shield being substantially contiguous with the outer surface of the shell when the ballistic shield is in the raised position.

3. The improvements of Claim 1, wherein the shell includes a forward terminal edge extending laterally of the face proximate the frontal area and the shield includes a laterally extending upper terminal edge, and wherein the terminal edge of the shield abuts the terminal edge of the

shell when the shield is in the raised position.

4. The improvements of Claim 1, wherein the shell includes first and second opposed lateral sides and the shield includes first and second terminal ends, the terminal ends being pivotally secured to respective lateral sides of the shell.

5. The improvements of Claim 1, further including detent means for alternately retaining the shield in the raised position and in the lowered position.

6. The improvements of Claim 5, wherein the detent means includes a ball component and a strike component, one of the components being carried by the shell and the other of the components being carried by the shield.

7. The improvements of Claim 1, further including latch means for releasably securing the shield to the shell when the shield is in the raised position.

8. The improvements of Claim 7, wherein the latch means includes a catch element and a strike element, one of the elements being carried by the shell, the other of the elements being carried by the shield.

9. The improvements of Claim 3, further including detent means for releasably retaining the shield in the raised position.

10. The improvements of Claim 7, wherein the detent means includes a hook and loop fastener having an element thereof carried at the terminal edge of the shell and a complementary element thereof carried at the terminal edge of the shield.

11. A method of fabricating a helmet for protectively receiving the head of a user, the head including a face having a frontal area and a mandibular area, the method including steps of:

forming a shell having an integral anterior terminal portion;

separating the terminal portion from the shell; and

joining the terminal portion to the shell for movement between a raised position for spanning the frontal area of the face and a lowered position for spanning the mandibular area of the face.

12. The method of Claim 11, wherein the step of joining includes the substep of connecting the terminal portion to the shell for pivotal movement therebetween.

13. The method of Claim 11, further including the step of providing detent means for alternately retaining the terminal portion in the raised position and in the lowered position.

14. The method of Claim 11, wherein the step of separating includes the substep of creating an anterior edge on the shell and an upper edge on the terminal portion, the upper edge abutting the anterior edge when the terminal portion is in the raised position.

15. The method of Claim 14, further including the step of securing an element of an engagement pair to the anterior edge of the shell and securing a complementary element of the engagement pair to the upper edge of the terminal portion, the element and the complementary element engaging to releasably retain the anterior portion in the raised position.

16. The method of Claim 11, wherein the shell includes an outer surface and the terminal portion includes an outer surface, the method further including the step of aligning the outer surface of the shell with the outer surface of the terminal portion, whereby the outer surface of the terminal portion of the terminal portion is substantially contiguous with the outer surface of the shell when the terminal portion is in the raised position.

17. The method of Claim 16, including the additional step of fastening an element of an engagement pair to the outer surface of the shell and fastening a complementary element of the engagement pair to the outer surface of the terminal portion, the element and the complementary element engaging to releasably retain the anterior portion in the raised position.